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Doctrinal Theology.

THEOLOGY.

(Continued.)

WILL.

Will is an attribute of God inasmuch as he consciously prompts his own acts, and is intent upon the execution of his purposes, the accomplishment of his designs, the realization of his counsels, and the fulfillment of his ordinances. Will is one of the characteristics of rational, self-conscious, personal agencies. The acts of a person are that person's acts inasmuch as they are consciously prompted by such person, and an accessory to an act is again a person who consciously concurs in prompting such act, though the *materiale* of the act be wholly or in part performed by another. Thus God is active by his own promptings. Every act of God not only presupposes, but implies volition. And, again, volition is, in God, linked with action, the conscious and intentional exertion of power. This is indicated in the words, *Who hath resisted his will?*¹⁾ Of him the Psalmist says, *Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth,*²⁾ and, *Our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*³⁾ When God acts, his act

1) Rom. 9, 19.

2) Ps. 135, 6.

3) Ps. 115, 3.

Practical Theology.

MEDICINA PASTORALIS.

(Continued.)

B. Special Pathology.

The material nature of man, or the human body, is an organism, in which the various parts are joined together according to a certain plan, in certain organic relations to each other and to the whole organism. In a sound body, each of the several parts of the organism occupies its proper place, maintains its proper structure, performs its proper functions, and contributes its proper share to the well-being of the rest of the parts and of the whole organism. On the other hand, an abnormal condition of a part of the organism is an ailment not only of that part, but, in a way and measure, also of the organism. Thus, a disease located in the nervous, circulatory, respiratory, or alimentary system is a disease of the body as a whole, and may debilitate, prostrate, and eventually kill, the entire body.

The soul, too, is a unit, which, though not composed of parts, as the material body, is endowed with various capacities, or capable of various functions, each of which is distinct in itself and must not be confounded with other functions, but each of which is a function of the same soul as of a definite and, in its normal state, normally constituted individual. And the soul is also liable to abnormal states and conditions, derangements of various kinds, which, though they are ailments of the same soul, must not be confounded with one another. It is the same soul that perceives, remembers, imagines, thinks, reasons, wills, has affections of various kinds; and yet memory, understanding, and will are by no means the same. To take dyspepsia

for heart disease, a diseased liver for pulmonary phthisis, a tumor for pregnancy, or vice versa, are mistakes in medical practice; and to consider the will at fault where in fact the understanding claims first attention, or vice versa, is just as truly a mistake in pastoral practice.

But while body and soul are two distinct entities, each having its peculiar nature and constitution, the two are in the living human person so intimately united that the one is never independent of the other. There exists between the two a reciprocity of influences which should be taken into account both by the physician and the pastor. The blush of shame, the pallor of fear and anger, the accelerated pulse and palpitation of the heart due to mental excitement, are physical processes, while the mental states which cause them are psychical in their nature; and, again, abnormalities of the mind, hallucinations, mono-mania of various types, even conscientious scruples and religious fanaticism, may be superinduced by nervous irritation or derangement, and, in such cases, may yield to proper medical treatment where arguments, demonstration, and remonstrance would prove of no avail or even make matters worse. Certain stages of physical development are accompanied by or bring on aggravations of certain sinful propensities of the soul, voluptuousness, pride, mistrust, avarice, contentiousness. Disturbed or abnormal marital relations may be at the bottom of sporadic or habitual inebriety, slothfulness, or other immoral complications. A sin which is manifest, and which the sinner may freely admit but refuse to abate or redress, is in not a few cases grafted upon another sin, perhaps of a different category, carefully concealed by the sinner himself and others directly or indirectly interested. Thus a criminal has been known to bring about a sinful divorce from his wife in order to marry an accomplice and thereby shut out her testimony against him. The love of money or the love of sway has brought on the sin of apostasy before and after Henry of Navarre. The Lord's supper has been avoided

because of an unwillingness to unburden the conscience from a hidden or open sin. Personal enmity against a fellow member of the church has kept men and women and entire families away from public worship and the use of the means of grace.

All this goes to show that a mere catalogue of spiritual ailments with the principal symptoms of each would be of little use in the hands of a pastoral practitioner. The pastor's patient is not a defective machine in need of repair, but a human person, and must be treated as such, as that individual person peculiarly constituted, conditioned, associated, environed, embarrassed, encumbered, etc., etc.

Again, however, the pastor should beware of going into practice as a "specialist." He is to take heed unto *all the flock*.¹⁾ The medical specialist is rarely a desirable family physician, and the pastoral specialist is apt to neglect the many in taking care of a few, or to pay attention to one sin or class of sins and to lose sight of others. It will not do to fight the sin of promiscuous dancing and allow the slandering tongue, the neglect of public worship and holy communion, strife and enmity between individuals and families, avarice, dishonest dealing, and usurious practices, neglect of parental and filial duties, and other sins, to go unchecked and even unnoticed.

We have deemed it expedient to premise what has been hitherto said in this chapter in order to forestall misconstruction or misapplication of what we are now ready to present to the reader.

While the number and variety of physical ailments to which mankind is exposed is illimitable and truly appalling, the various diseases which make up the great bulk of a physician's practice are, generally, comparatively few, and even these are largely inclined to be gregarious, occurring in numbers of cases at certain seasons or in certain neigh-

1) Acts 20, 28. 31.

borhoods. At the same time, most of these diseases are so clearly characterized that, especially in the absence of complications, the experienced physician recognizes them at first sight, or from a few symptoms mentioned by the messenger by whom he was called, and he may even have been looking out for them before they came. The same may generally be said of pastoral practice. Here, too, the cases of frequent occurrence are covered by a comparatively small catalogue of spiritual ailments, of sins which have either been known the world over in all ages, or have sprung up and become endemic among modern civilized nations. Their number is so small, that there is no need of classification, and we may at once specify them, observing, of course, a certain order of arrangement. And as sin is the transgression of or deviation from the law or any commandment of the law, we prefer the order laid down in the decalogue as we have it in the catechism.

1. IDOLATROUS WORSHIP. This sin is by no means found only among pagan tribes, in Buddhist temples and Mohammedan mosques; it is deplorably frequent among such as deem themselves Christians. And here, again, we do not refer chiefly to Mariolatry and religious rites performed before images of apostles and martyrs, the idolatrous abuse of dead men's bones or other relics, or of the consecrated host. False gods are not only carved in wood, or dug out of the ground, or shut up in a monstrance; they may also be the creations of the human mind or imagination. The masonic Architect of the Universe, or the Supreme Being of other Lodges, is as really and truly a man-made god as any idol of wood or stone or any fetish or totem of a savage. The true Architect of the Universe, the Maker of heaven and earth, and the only Supreme Being is the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and he who worships and adores a god whom the Jew and others who deny the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth are also permitted and willing to adore and worship, and

every one who joins in or countenances such worship, is an idolater, no matter what name he may apply to the creation of his mind or another man's imagination. For *whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father,*¹⁾ and *all men should honor the Son, EVEN AS they honor the Father.*²⁾ The Chaplain of a lodge which performs such worship, when he pronounces prayer to the common object of adoration for such as confess and such as deny the divine Sonship of Jesus, acts as a priest to an idol; and when he reads selections from the Bible and applies the names of God occurring in the sacred texts to the god of the Lodge, he carries that false god into the very sanctuary of holy Scripture and sets up the idol of the Lodge in place of the God of Abraham, the Holy One of Israel, and Jesus Christ, the true God, who has said: *I am that I am;*³⁾ *I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God;*⁴⁾ and *I will not give my glory unto another.*⁵⁾ The very names of "Architect of the Universe" and "Supreme Being," etc., as applied to that false god, are sacrilegious falsehoods; for a god who is not the Triune God is not the Maker of heaven and earth, is not a Supreme Being, is, in fact, no being at all, but a fiction, existing nowhere at all. But what a hospital has this sin alone made of the church in our day! It is true, many of those who worship in the lodge worship nowhere else. The religion of the lodge is just what they want, and when Masonry first became prominent it was looked upon as an institution for men who had laid aside the old faith and the doctrine of the Christian catechism and emancipated themselves from the church; and to-day, if Christians would but ask themselves honestly whether a god adored by certain members of the Order can be the Lord Jesus Christ, their conscience would say, "Impossible!" That even Christian ministers are found in these societies is an offense which has misled

1) 1 John 2, 23.

2) John 5, 23.

3) Exod. 3, 14.

4) Is. 44, 6.

5) Is. 48, 11.

many, but is no real argument against our position; for why should not a minister who would worship with a Unitarian and a Jewish rabbi outside of the lodge worship with the same persons or the like of them *in* the lodge? The sin is in both cases essentially the same, a denial of the true God and of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This sin is generally complicated with certain real or putative material interests, in the absence of which a Christian would never think of such idolatrous foolishness as lodge worship. It is chiefly by the insurance feature connected with most of the Societies, itself also immoral in its nature, that men are drawn into the Lodges and still more powerfully held there after they have been members and borne the expenses of membership for years. In other cases, political, professional or other temporal advantages are sought by uniting with these societies. Owing to these complications, the *prognosis* is, in many cases, unfavorable. Yet, with proper and patient treatment, highly gratifying results have been obtained. On the other hand, where the evil is allowed to spread, its ruinous effects will sooner or later appear in individuals and entire congregations.

2. APOSTASY. This sin is of far more frequent occurrence in our time and country than it was in earlier days and in other countries, owing to the religious indifferentism which has insinuated itself into the present generation and has been fostered and promoted by the multitude of sects which have sprung up and are from year to year growing more numerous under the free institutions of this country. Our public schools furnish, and should furnish, a purely secular education. The religious instruction imparted in the Sunday schools, meager as it is in every respect, is least of all calculated to afford thorough indoctrination along confessional lines. Doctrinal sermons are comparatively few in American pulpits, while inter-denominational pulpit- and altar-fellowship is common, and diversity of doctrine is generally looked upon as no barrier to fraternal relations

and ecclesiastical co-operation. Letters of dismissal to churches of other denominations are granted to pastors and laymen and accepted beyond the line as a matter of course. With all these influences round about them and these examples daily before their eyes, many who were differently trained have learned to look upon the transition from the Lutheran to another church, not as the sin of apostasy, but as a matter of expediency and of legitimate accommodation to circumstances. Marriage with a person differently connected, the absence of a Lutheran church in the place or neighborhood, a preference of language, business interests, personal friendships, are among the causes of apostasy.

As the pastor's official relation to the apostate terminates when the latter's connection with another church and its minister is consummated, early pastoral interposition is called for when circumstances or symptoms point toward danger of apostasy.

3. NEGLECT OF THE PROPER USE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE. To despise the word of God and the sacraments is the neglect not only of a Christian duty,¹⁾ but also of a condition of our spiritual life and vigor and growth; it is a manner of spiritual suicide.²⁾ Though God is able to sustain our physical life without material food, yet he who would persistently abstain from taking nourishment would violate the commandment which says, *Thou shalt not kill*. So God has ordained that the spiritual man should live and grow on the bread of life stored in the Scriptures and dispensed by the stewards in the household of God, and by the sacraments instituted for our salvation, and we have no divine promise that our spiritual life shall be sustained without the means of grace. Persistent abstinence from the use of these means is either a token of or sure to bring on spiritual

1) John 8, 47. Col. 3, 16. Eccl. 5, 1. Hebr. 10, 25. Luke 10, 16. Luke 16, 29. 1 Cor. 11, 24 f.

2) Luke 16, 28—31. James 1, 21. Luke 11, 28. 1 Pet. 2, 2. Mark 16, 15. 16. 1 Tim. 4, 16.

death. Hence, if there are any ailments which should claim a pastor's attention, this is certainly one of them. When a member of a Christian congregation, in fair physical health, rarely appears in public worship, and seldom or never at the Lord's table, this should invariably be looked upon as a cause of serious alarm. A congregation in which this evil has begun to spread is undergoing a process of spiritual decadence; and as the spiritual energies languish and the very means whereby the spirit should be ever anew invigorated and equipped for individual and united efforts to subdue the flesh are set aside, the flesh will unfailingly assert itself in works of the flesh. This evil, too, will often be found in complication with or based upon other sins, such as personal enmities, avarice, general worldly-mindedness, evil associations, etc.

The practice of unduly procrastinating the baptism of infants is also a species of this evil and should be dealt with as such.

The prognosis is favorable in the earlier stages, before the patient has contracted the habit of denying himself the proper measure of spiritual nourishment. Hence young people after confirmation, young couples during their early married life, mothers with increasing families, business men who experience either reverses or marked success in business, should be kept under special surveillance, and every case of incipient neglect of attendance upon public worship or at the Lord's table should call forth prompt and energetic pastoral action.

4. NEGLECT OF PARENTAL DUTIES. This is an evil which has caused and continually causes the loss of many souls. It is the duty of parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,¹⁾ and he who refuses to provide for his own, and especially those of his own house, is worse than an infidel.²⁾ Parents should instruct their children or have them instructed in the pure

1) Eph. 6, 4.

2) 1 Tim. 5, 8.

doctrine of the Christian faith; they should train them to obedience and filial reverence, to chastity, honesty, industry, and truthfulness, they should do what may be in their power to make them useful members of the church and of human society, able to earn an honest livelihood for themselves and those who may be dependent upon them. They should devote to them their parental care also after they have ripened into manhood and womanhood, especially by way of counsel and admonition of which they may be in need. They should intercede for them in prayer at the throne of God. Let no one object, the performance of these duties is every parent's own affair, and the pastor has no business in another man's family circle. Most certainly the performance of parental duties is the parent's business; but it is God who has made it that, who has enjoyed those duties, and to neglect them is *sin*; and their persistent and wilful neglect is mortal sin and may result in the eternal death of both parent and children; and to do what he can to prevent this and to save the souls of parents and children is the pastor's business, for God has made it so. The pastor should take heed to all the flock;¹⁾ he should not suffer the lambs to be neglected, even by their parents, in what is necessary for the spiritual welfare and safety. Hence, when parents, while unable or unwilling to instruct them or have them instructed at home, refuse to commit them to a Christian school provided for the children of the church, and thus withhold from them the nurture and admonition of the Lord, there is double cause for pastoral action, the sin of the parents and the danger and damage to the children. Again, when children, after confirmation and while yet under the paternal roof, give offense by unchristian conduct, it is proper that the parents should be held responsible until they have shown that they have done what they could to keep their children within the bounds of godliness and Christian propriety. There was a deep

1) Acts 20, 28.

significance in the statute according to which an incontinent daughter was to be stoned at the door of her father's house;¹⁾ and Eli, the priest, though he had made a feeble effort to correct his sons,²⁾ stands censured to this day, *because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.*³⁾ It is doubtless with a view of enhancing a pastor's efficiency in the performance of his duty in such cases, that St. Paul, when he enumerates the qualifications for the ministry, says that a bishop should be *one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.*⁴⁾

5. INEBRIETY. More men are drowned in the cup than in the sea, and the vice of drunkenness, when it has once taken hold of its victim, puts those whose duty it is to fight it at fearful odds. The evil is often discovered by the pastor only after it has already run a long-continued course and gone far in wrecking both body and soul. Efforts to oust the enemy may only drive him under cover, and the drink devil is one of those unclean spirits that, having gone out of a man, will return into the house whence they came out and, taking with them seven other spirits of greater wickedness, will make the last state of that man worse than the first.⁵⁾

There are various types of the drunkard. The saloon sot, who goes to the tap-house to fill up with beer or whiskey, and comes home between two companions unconscious or with just enough control of himself to beat his wife and break the furniture, is but one species. Then there is the habitual tippler who flies to the bottle from his couch and is actually under the influence of liquor until he retires to his couch. There is the laboring man whose brain is fuddled every day as he runs a third part or more of his earnings through the wandering beer bucket. There is the farmer who never would find his way home from town on

1) Deut. 22, 21.

2) 1 Sam. 2, 23. 24.

3) 1 Sam. 3, 12—14.

4) 1 Tim. 3, 4.

5) Matt. 12, 43—45.

market days but for the instinct of his horses. There is the professional man who keeps his liquor case in his library and whose physician has warned him time and again of the dangers of alcoholism. All these habitual drinkers have entered upon their course by occasional excesses, or have drifted into the habit of over-indulgence in strong drink by gradually increasing the frequency and quantity of their potations until what had been an occasional stimulant has become a regular intoxicant. And as most of these cases come under the pastor's observation when they have reached a highly aggravated stage, the prognosis is, generally, very unfavorable, especially since this vice tends to undermine and honey-comb the moral as well as the physical constitution of its victims. The drunkard may be led to understand that he is ruining his body and soul; but in spite of his tearful resolutions and solemn promises, of pastoral and fraternal admonitions and the entreaties of those who are nearest and dearest to his heart, he will continue in his evil downward course, and even temporary reformation is apt to be followed by relapses prompted by internal cravings or by evil influences from without.

6. FETICIDE. Though this is largely a hidden sin, it is, especially in the more distressing cases, when the mother's life is also threatened in consequence of the destruction of fetal life, more frequently than it was a generation ago forced upon the pastor's attention. The nefarious modes of interference with the course of nature for the restriction or limitation of offsprings are in our day so extensively practiced, that in many circles, especially among what is called the better class of people, comparatively few married couples are exempt from the charge of wilful destruction or suppression of human life in its incipient stages. Of course, there are cases of reduced fecundity and even of barrenness to-day, where maternity is longed and prayed for, and the pastor should beware of unjust suspicion. But these cases are exceptional. The divine blessing pronounced in Para-

dise, *Be fruitful and multiply*¹⁾, has not been revoked, and the prevalent three-children-system is being maintained by multitudes of sins against nature and the commandments of God. Many young girls nowadays are more thoroughly posted on ways and means of preventing maternity than many physicians, and when the measures resorted to have failed, the conscientious doctor, who refuses to yield to the importunities of wives unwilling to be mothers may see his remonstrances against the sin and danger of abortion answered by renewed entreaties, or by a burst of indignation and the determined announcement that help would be sought and found elsewhere. But while the evil is so widespread that it has led many to put down a blessing as a curse, and what should be an honor is very generally looked upon as a disgrace, the sinful practices touched upon in this section are of such a nature as to render special pastoral treatment of the evil extremely difficult and in most cases impossible.

7. RESCISSION OF VALID BETROTHAL. A valid betrothal, the lawful and unconditional mutual consent of a marriageable man and a marriageable woman to be husband and wife, makes the parties to such compact essentially husband and wife before God,²⁾ though the state, prescribing certain forms and evidences of marriage, does not recognize them as such. The dissolution of such espousals is, therefore, admissible only for the cause which justifies the dissolution of marriage,³⁾ not for any other cause nor by mutual consent,⁴⁾ and the abandonment of one party by the other is desertion from the bond of matrimony.⁵⁾ That such is the nature and obligation of valid espousals has largely been forgotten even among Christians, although even the secular law recognizes the maxim that *consensus, non concubitus, facit matrimonium*. To break off an engagement, especially when the parties have agreed to separate and rings

1) Gen. 1, 27. 28.

2) Gen. 29, 21. Matt. 1, 18—20.

3) Matt. 19, 9.

4) Gen. 2, 24. Matt. 19, 5. 6.

5) 1 Cor. 7, 10. 15.

and presents have been returned, is looked upon as quite legitimate and in many cases as wise and expedient. The argument that those who cannot agree had better separate, is, of course, no argument to the point at all, since it would serve as well to justify separation after the consummation of marriage, and it is, in fact, already quite frequently employed in supposed justification of divorce under the "omnibus" clause. That those who cannot agree had better not unite, is very true. But when they have once united in what is essentially wedlock, i. e., by valid betrothal, considerations of expediency can no longer prevail over the divine injunction, *What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*¹⁾ The frequency of these separations is largely the outcome of the irreverent and frivolous frame of mind which often tumbles young people into a relation which should be entered into only after mature and prayerful deliberation and with the full understanding that the step which is thus taken can never be retraced.

While, however, the divine law which governs these cases is very clear and admits of no suspension or relaxation, it is frequently a matter of no little difficulty to ascertain the circumstances of the case to be adjudicated, and to determine whether it comes under the rule which prohibits the putting asunder of what God has joined together. Where duress or fraud has brought about the mere semblance of consent, or where lineal consanguinity or pre-existing marriage or absolutely precluded valid espousals, God has not joined the parties together in matrimonial bonds. In many cases where the existence of valid betrothal is fully established, a careful investigation will reveal the fact that the separation of the betrothed is instigated by third parties, or due to ignorance of the real significance of the nature of the compact of betrothal and the state superinduced thereby, and in these cases, timely and

1) Matt. 19, 6.

well conducted endeavors to bring about a reconciliation have proved successful even under adverse circumstances. The cases are aggravated when, after the separation, one of the parties has entered into a new compact with a third party. This new engagement is, of course, void *ab initio*, if the first engagement was valid, and also in these cases the deserted party must beware of consenting to the ungodly separation, but do what is in his or her power to bring about a reconciliation and a restoration of the proper relation between those whom God has once joined together. And if the deserter has been prevailed upon by fraternal or pastoral admonition to return to duty, and the deserted party refuses to condone and to receive the penitent sinner, then such refusal constitutes desertion and the originally innocent party now becomes the guilty party of a new case and must be dealt with accordingly.

8. DESERTION AFTER CONSUMMATION OF MARRIAGE.

Most of what has been said in the previous section applies also here. The evil occurs in many forms. Thus, the procurement of a judicial divorce for a cause which cannot by divine right justify a permanent separation is a species of desertion, the party procuring the divorce being the deserter. The innocent party refusing to receive the penitent guilty party in turn becomes the guilty party of a new case of which the guilty party of the former case is now the innocent party. When the parties have agreed to separate and to cease to be husband and wife, they are both guilty and must be led to understand that their agreement was sinful and has no validity, since "a pact to perform an unlawful act is void" everywhere. The cases of desertion are often complicated in such a way as to render an adjustment extremely difficult. The causes of the separation often lie where they are least sought for, and until they are found and removed or neutralized, all efforts to bring about a reconciliation remain fruitless. The disturbances are sometimes of so delicate a nature, that only a person who has

the full confidence of the parties can mediate between them. In such cases the pastor often labors under the same disadvantage as the physician from whom the history of a case is being withheld. In other instances, the causes of the matrimonial trouble are before everybody's eyes, even getting into the newspapers and the police records, drunkenness and abusiveness on the part of the husband, coldness and neglect of duty toward her husband and coquetry and flirtation with other men on the part of the wife. In still other cases, certain types of mental derangement on a sexual basis are at the bottom of the trouble, causing groundless jealousy or conduct apt to create suspicion of unfaithfulness. In these cases, the medical treatment of the diseased party and the pastoral care of the same party or of both parties must go together.

While desertion, the permanent withdrawal from conjugal cohabitation in the absence of sufficient cause of divorce, is under all circumstances a sinful disruption of the bond of marriage, there may be circumstances which will justify a temporary separation in a given case. Where the state or conduct of the one party is such as to needlessly or wrongfully endanger the life and limb of the other party, the party thus threatened is entitled to protection, if necessary, also by temporary separation, either by the removal of the menacing party, or by the withdrawal of the party menaced during cohabitation with the other, always, however, with the understanding that such separation must not be tantamount to the cessation of marriage, but that the parties thus separated remain husband and wife, again to cohabit when the cause of the temporary separation shall have been removed.

9. MARRIAGE WITHIN PROHIBITED DEGREES. These unions are either incestuous, as those in the direct ascending or descending line of consanguinity, or not incestuous, as those in the second degree of collateral consanguinity or affinity. Incestuous unions never constitute marriage and

must be dissolved. Marriages within prohibited degrees, but not incestuous, should not be contracted, but when consummated must not be dissolved. Marriages of this class are those between uncle and niece,¹⁾ aunt and nephew,²⁾ with a deceased brother's wife,³⁾ with a deceased wife's daughter,⁴⁾ with a deceased wife's sister.⁵⁾ The pastor will not solemnize such marriages, but do what is in his power to lead the parties contemplating such unions to understand that their will in this matter is not in accordance with the expressed will of God. The earlier this is done, the better, and the pastor who has reason to fear that a member of his flock may be in danger of committing himself in this direction will do well to interpose his timely warning before relations have sprung up and matured which it would be very difficult to rescind. If, however, in spite of his endeavors to the contrary and, of course, without his official recognition and concurrence, a marriage of this description has been carried into effect, the pastor will not insist upon a separation of the parties thus united, but, recognizing as marriage what, according to Lev. 20, 20. 21, God himself did not refuse to recognize as such, though contracted against his divine will and injunction, the pastor, likewise, while still maintaining the ground he had occupied before the consummation of such marriage, will content himself with leading the parties to a penitent acknowledgement of the sin committed in entering into the state in which God will, under his pardoning grace, permit them to live as in his holy ordinance.

10. ILL-GOTTEN GAIN. Under this head we would group together a class of sins widely prevalent in our day and recognized as sins by comparatively few, such as fraudulent methods in business, gambling in futures, lotteries, aleatory life insurance contracts, usurious investments, all

1) Lev. 18, 14; 10, 20.

3) Lev. 18, 6. 16; 20, 21.

5) Lev. 18, 6.

2) Lev. 18, 12. 13.

4) Lev. 18, 17.

of which are but so many endeavors to obtain profits not acquired by honest labor. And it is remarkable that many who bear and boast the Christian name fail or refuse to recognize as sinful and unworthy of a Christian what many who are not Christians, but in whom the natural sense of right and wrong still sufficiently asserts itself, most readily condemn as morally doubtful or objectionable in these practices. But this is so far from being an argument precluding pastoral procedure against these sinful ways to ill-gotten gain, that it should rather serve as an incentive to most earnest and persistent effort on the part of every faithful pastor to combat these evils, which, if allowed to run their course, tend to stunt the growth of a Christian's spiritual nature, benumb his conscience, chill the ardor of faith and charity, open the floodgates of worldly-mindedness, and gradually turn a congregation into a barren district when it should be a garden of God abounding in all manner of good works.

11. BACKBITING. This is a sin which has not only blasted the good name of many a Christian man and woman, but disturbed the peace of entire families and congregations and caused disruptions which every amount of pastoral and fraternal intercession failed to heal. There are Christian circles in which this sin of feasting on scandal, of ventilating the weaknesses of absent brethren and sisters from the pastor and his wife down to the little boys and girls at school, has grown to be a deep-rooted habit, a real passion which craves satisfaction. The scandal-monger looks forward to a meeting with others of his or her stripe with an impatient desire to get rid of a piece of news which promises to create a sensation and raise the contributor to a station of importance proportionate to that of the person or persons implicated or to the gravity of the charge or charges laid at the absent brother's or sister's door. It is but natural that for this and other reasons a tendency to magnify the faults and multiply the sins of their victims also be-

comes habitual with such talebearers, that idle rumors are given forth as reliable information, vague conjectures as established facts, that sinister motives are imputed to those who were prompted by the best intentions, that mitigating circumstances are ignored or concealed and aggravating circumstances supplied, that, in short, falsehoods are heaped upon falsehoods to appease one's own and other people's appetite for scandal.

A congregation which is infested with this evil is in a highly deplorable condition. The pastor is sorely handicapped in the performance of his duties. His sermons will be largely interpreted in the light of this or that man's record, this or that woman's score. He will be supposed to have referred to or hinted at things which were not in his mind or of which he was entirely ignorant. Efforts will be made to use the parsonage as the preferred dumping ground for a reeking garbage of evil reports; and woe to the pastor and the congregation if this policy succeeds! His pastoral visits will by many be welcomed chiefly or solely as opportunities for the confession of other people's sins. An unguarded or even a very pertinent word spoken by him in the absence of witnesses may come back to him next day or after weeks and months as an ugly monster into which it has been disfigured under way. A general feeling of insecurity from evil tongues will beget a general feeling of distrust, and this will prove most detrimental to the pastor, whose position should be eminently one of confidence. Considering all this, we will understand that few sins, if any, are apt to be more destructive to the well-being of a congregation than these sins of the tongue, which are so often underrated and so difficult to subdue and to eradicate, that many pastors fail to give them due attention, and that others, after a vigorous fight, have abandoned what they considered a hopeless case. A. G.
